



**House Judiciary Committee**

**March 31, 2021**

**Senate Bill 201**

**Criminal Procedure - Automatic Expungement**

**Support**

NCADD-Maryland strongly supports Senate Bill 201. NCADD-Maryland has long advocated for policies that help people involved with the criminal justice system avoid some of the unintended collateral damage caused by our drug policies. When people who struggle with substance use disorders get treatment and start the recovery process, criminal records are often huge barriers to success. Obtaining employment and housing is difficult, and sometimes impossible. Without a place to live or a reliable income, some people are much more likely to re-offend and/or return to alcohol and drug use.

Senate Bill 201 will automatically expunge non-convictions from people's records. In cases where people were arrested in error or inappropriately, or when charges are dismissed, these instances still appear on a person's record. This can lead to incorrect assumptions about a person's involvement in criminal activity. Making sure that non-convictions are erased will help in reducing the discrimination that so often follows those who have been incarcerated.

These kinds of policy changes are a necessary component to significantly improving our communities. When people have served their time, they should have the opportunities and supports needed to ensure they are able maintain productive lives and livelihoods with their families. Removing some of the barriers to success will also help people with substance use disorders maintain their recovery.

We urge your support of Senate Bill 201.

*The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.*